

STATE OF IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
UTILITIES BOARD

IN RE: EFFICIENT USE OF TELEPHONE NUMBERING RESOURCES	DOCKET NO. NOI-00-3
---	---------------------

**ORDER REQUIRING COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE PROVIDERS
TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS FOR NXX CODES**

(Issued March 21, 2001)

By this order, the Utilities Board (Board) orders all communications service providers offering service in Iowa to file with the Board a copy of each application for a new or growth NXX code at the same time the application is submitted to the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA). This will allow the Board to review each application for compliance with Board requirements and help to avoid issuance of central office codes, a limited resource, based on invalid applications.

Telephone numbers are the lifeblood of local exchange service. Without a supply of telephone numbers to assign, a communications service provider cannot sell services to new customers or add lines for existing customers. Under the existing North American Numbering Plan, telephone numbers in Iowa are assigned by central office code, or prefix. In a standard seven-digit local telephone number,

the prefix is the first three digits, sometimes referred to as the “NXX¹.” Each prefix represents 10,000 potential telephone numbers. Because certain prefixes are unavailable for use as local exchange telephone numbers (such as prefixes starting with a 0 or 1, or special prefixes like 800 or 911), there are only about 750 to 760 prefixes available in any particular area code. (The actual number of available prefixes will vary somewhat from one area code to another due to the use of individual protected codes for various purposes.) Area code exhaustion occurs when all of the available prefixes are assigned. Prior to exhaust, the Board must initiate area code relief proceedings to provide additional available prefixes, an expensive and disruptive process that should not be undertaken unless necessary.

Communications service providers apply to NANPA for new or growth prefixes². Currently, prefixes are assigned by NANPA at a national rate of approximately 40,000 prefixes per year. Under its existing guidelines, NANPA must approve or reject each application within ten days of the date the application is filed. The volume of applications and the short time period available for review makes it difficult, if not impossible, for NANPA to determine whether each application complies with all applicable requirements, especially state-specific requirements. For example,

¹ The digits in a telephone number are sometimes represented as “NXX-XXXX.” The X’s represent any digit from 0 to 9, while the N must be a digit between 2 and 9, inclusive. The existing network does not allow assignment of a 0 or 1 to the first digit in a local number because those digits are used to signal a request for operator assistance or a toll call.

² A new prefix is required when a carrier first enters an exchange, so the carrier can begin to offer its own telephone numbers to customers. A growth prefix is required when a carrier projects that it will run out of available telephone numbers in a particular exchange.

in Iowa a landline communications service provider must have a certificate of public convenience and necessity, issued pursuant to Iowa Code § 476.29 (2001), and must have approved maps and tariffs on file showing a service territory that includes the exchange for which the new prefix is requested, before the provider can offer service in the exchange. If the provider's certificate, tariff, or map (or a pending application concerning the necessary documents) does not include the exchange for which the provider is requesting new telephone numbers, then the application is invalid and should be denied. If prefixes are assigned to communications service providers on the basis of invalid applications, then prefixes are wasted on noncompliant services and the projected date of area code exhaustion is accelerated. Thus, it is in the public interest for each application to be reviewed for compliance with all Iowa requirements before it is granted. As noted above, because of the volume of applications and the varying requirements of each state, NANPA cannot efficiently review each application, but must instead rely on the various state regulatory agencies.

In order to fulfill this role, the Board must receive a copy of each application for a new or additional prefix at the time it is filed with NANPA. Accordingly, with this order the Board is directing that all communications service providers in Iowa shall file with the Board three copies of each application for additional NXX codes on the same date the application is submitted to NANPA. This includes landline and wireless service providers, paging companies, and any other person offering

communications service to the public for compensation and using telephone numbers to do so.

This order is issued pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code §§ 476.1, 476.3, 476.8, 476.9, 476.10, 476.15, 476.29, and 476.101.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

Whenever any communications service provider in Iowa files an application with the North American Numbering Plan Administrator for new or additional NXX codes, the service provider shall also file three copies of the application with the Board. The copies shall be filed with the Board on or before the date the original application is received by the North American Numbering Plan Administrator. Copies may be addressed to the Acting Executive Secretary, Iowa Utilities Board, 350 Maple Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0069. Each such filing should include on the first page sufficient information to identify the service provider, a contact person, and a reference to this docket (Docket No. NOI-00-3).

UTILITIES BOARD

/s/ Allan T. Thoms

/s/ Susan J. Frye

ATTEST:

/s/ Sharon Mayer
Acting Executive Secretary, Asst. to

/s/ Diane Munns

Dated at Des Moines, Iowa, this 21st day of March, 2001.